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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [EG](#) [SO](#)  
SUBJECT: EGYPT, ARAB LEAGUE WANT AFRICAN UNION FORCE,  
RECONCILIATION IN SOMALIA

REF: 2006 CAIRO 7260

Classified by Minister Counselor for Political and Economic  
Affairs William R. Stewart for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: With the impending withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Somalia, Egypt and the Arab League are encouraging deployment of an African Union (AU) peace-keeping operation (PKO) as soon as possible. Both are also pressing for national reconciliation, to include members of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), towards the goal of a Somalia governed by the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFI) with the participation of the ICU. End summary.

¶2. (C) In early January, Egyptian President Mubarak publicly called for deploying peace keepers to maintain Somali stability. Ambassador Mustapha Remali, deputy assistant minister for East and Southern Africa at the Foreign Ministry, told poloff January 25 that this force could be an AU, rather than purely IGASOM, mission, in accord with the recent meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council, and should still exclude troops from countries that neighbor Somalia. He emphasized the need to secure funding and logistical support, saying that Egypt has not yet been asked to provide money or troops. Egypt, he continued, would not consider providing troops without a peace agreement between the Somali factions.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Salah Halima, Special Advisor to the Arab League on Somalia and Sudan, on January 24 also stressed to poloff the importance of quickly deploying an AU PKO. He said the Arab League plans to send a delegation to the region after the current African Union summit concludes on January 31, to call for quickly deploying the force and to press for reconciliation. Neither Halima nor Remali thought a new UN Security Council Resolution to expand UNSCR 1725's mandate from IGASOM to AU-wide forces was necessary.

¶4. (C) Remali and Halima both stressed the importance of national reconciliation. Halima expressed his personal opinion that bringing dismissed Speaker of Parliament Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden back into the government would help towards reconciliation, though Remali said that this was "purely a Somali affair." Halima, who is also Deputy Chairman of the Egyptian Council for African Affairs and a member of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Relations, said that the prevailing opinion is that U.S. military action in Somalia is hurting, rather than helping, reconciliation efforts. Remali said the Egyptian government had no official stance on U.S. military actions in Somalia.

¶5. (C) Comment: Egyptian and Arab League contacts seem disappointed with the Ethiopian military intervention, which went contrary to their previous position that negotiation, not force, was the way towards peace. After the military

actions their goals and methods remain the same: ensuring a stable Somalia under the TFI, with the consent of the ICU, through dialogue rather than military action.

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